

ANCIENT CAPITALS FROM THE SOANE MUSEUM.

The accompanying engravings represent other ancient marble capitals in the Soane Museum,* and form a class almost unknown to the public. They were mostly brought from Italy by S. H. Tatham.

Figure 4 consists of two separate marble fragments. The diameter being nearly the same in each, Sir John placed one on the top of the other.

Figure 6 represents the side of a marble capital of an engaged column brought from Pompeii and now in the museum at Naples; this was copied from Mr. Hakewill's sketch book.

NORFOLK CHURCHES.†

THE MELTHORPE.

"Churchwork is slow."

This little edifice, dedicated in honour of St. Andrew, comprises a chancel, a nave, and a square tower at the west end: the bearing by compass is 12° south of east. Our first visit found the general condition one so repugnant to a wholesome feeling of what became the God's tabernacle, that we have twice repeated it, to find at length some partial improvement, a few things meanly, though not altogether injudiciously, repaired.

A niche for the veneration occurs on the right within the outer doorway of the porch, which has for its sill an ancient carved tomb without cross. The dilapidated vousoirs of the arch have been replaced by a framework of wood, now fast verging on a similar state: the windows are perpendicular, of two lights.

Between the doors of the nave, that on the north side having a large hole in it, stands the font, a massive octagon, its rim much broken in wrenching out the staples of the cover. The sides, now plain, appear to have been charged with coloured scrolls, of which one—the letters I H S, the monogram of the name of Jesus—may perhaps be deciphered: the bowl is lined with lead and has a drain. On raising the top, we found in it a coil of rope, the sexton's grave-tackle, the only present use, as our informant very innocently informed us, to which the orifice is now applicable. And yet, in the orders and directions given by Bishop Wren, A.D. 1636, to be observed in his diocese of Norwich, it is enjoined, "that the font at baptism be filled with clear water, and that no dishes, pails, or basins be used in it, or instead of it." At the period of our last visit the ropes had yielded place to a linen blouse.

The rood-screen yet survives, although in a mutilated state, the "beautiful gates" having long since disappeared. Portions of elegant tracery remain on the panels of the lower section, and several piers or buttresses, having the fronts terminated by small attached half-round shafts with castellated capitals, present models of no ordinary attraction. Would that we might speak in praise of some recent attempts at restoration here, but such work is far above the skill of a common artisan. The sedilia are graduated in three separate seats, a form by no means usual in this deanery; a square perforation next the upper one communicates with the trefloiled fenestella adjoining. A shelf occurs here, supposed by some to have been a receptacle for the holy oil cruet, and beneath we find the usual water drain.

"It is always desirable that there should be a narrow entrance at the side of the chancel, appropriated to the use of the clergyman;" and this convenience has been carefully provided by the original builders. A crop of dandelions, *Ironodon taraxacum*, rooted in the crevices of its broken sill, indicates, however, that to use it is a thing out of mind here. An early English triplet occurs over the communion-table, that and the altar-rails forming no exception to the general decay. The decalogue, flanked on the gospel side by the royal arms, appears on the rood-screen. The lateral windows of the chancel, two of them lychoscopic, and the lanciform couplets of the nave, have all been blocked with flint to above the centre of elevation.

We have spoken of a partial repair; it con-

sists mainly in a remodelling of the pulpit and reading-pew, situate southward without the rood-screen. We were pleased to find the offensive tacking upon the altar no longer disgracing them; but when will all confess, and act on their convictions, that the place of prayer is in the chancel! An effigy in brass occurs in the central avenue near the font; it is well worthy of inspection.

The weather moulding of the ancient roof, seen on the western façade of the tower, indicates the extent to which the present meagre affair has been dropped. Would that it offered the only instance of spoliation! but how gross in many ways the disregard of this place where His honour dwelleth; how niggard the supply that has been extended to its necessities; how regular the tastes and dispositions by which that supply has been directed. The sleek steed in the rich man's stall, the costly furniture of his dwelling, have left an obolus only for the sanctuary, and even that has been ill-expended. But "is it a time to dwell in ceiled houses, and the Lord's house not regarded?"

C. T.

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.

At the annual general meeting, held on the 5th of May, Earl de Grey, President, in the chair; the report of the council on the affairs and finances of the institute was read, and the following office bearers for the ensuing year were elected:—

President.—Earl de Grey.

Vice-Presidents.—Messrs. H. E. Kendall, J. B. Papworth, W. Tite.

Ordinary Members of Council.—Messrs. Thomas Bellamy, W. Burn, E. M. Foxhall, George Godwin, James Noble, Charles Parker, W. F. Pocock, John Shaw, Sydney Smirke, James Thomson.

Hon. Secretaries.—Messrs. Ambrose Poynter, and George Bailey.

Hon. Secretary for Foreign Correspondence.—Mr. T. L. Donaldson.

On Monday, the 12th inst., Mr. Kendall in the chair, the Rev. Richard Burgess, B.D., read a paper "On the Walls of Ancient and Modern Rome." In opening the subject the rev. gentleman sketched the history of walling, and laid down as a law that no walls could be properly termed Cyclopean where any of the stones were cut. The walls of Mycenæ were a step beyond Cyclopean. He traced the gradual progress of Rome from the time of Romulus, and, taking his hearers round the enlarged city, explained the various gates and walls in the circuit. The whole circumference was thirteen miles, and he had estimated that the population had never been more than 160,000. Custom battered down walls and prejudices, and even the great wall of China was likely soon to fall.

EARL DE GREY'S CONVERSAZIONE.

EARL DE GREY, as President of the Institute of Architects, entertained the members of that body at his residence in St. James's-square, on Friday, the 9th instant, and invited a large number of the nobility, and men distinguished in literature, science and art, to meet them. By ten o'clock his lordship's superb suite of rooms were thronged, and presented a fine appearance. The presence of many of the handsomest women of whom the English Court can boast, added materially to the charm of the evening, and served to render this unquestionably the most brilliant conversation of the season. His Royal Highness Prince Albert was expected, but was unfortunately prevented from attending. The tables were filled with choice portfolios, and works of art. The council of the institute, comprising Mr. Papworth, Mr. Kendall, Mr. Noble, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Pocock, Mr. Godwin, Mr. W. Donaldson, Mr. Booth, Mr. Poynter, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Foxhall, Mr. Thomson, Mr. Grelhier, and Professor Donaldson, dined with Earl de Grey previously. In reply to an acknowledgment, on the part of the council, of the services rendered by the noble host to the Institute, very admirably tendered by Mr. Papworth, his Lordship expressed himself as ever most anxious for the prosperity of the association, and willing at all times to exert himself in its favour.

ARCHITECTURAL MEMS. FROM THE COUNTRY.

THE talked of appeal to the House of Lords has been entirely abandoned in the matter of the Stone Altar at the Round Church, Cambridge, and the costs have been paid by the church-warden's proctor. A table of oak elaborately carved, is nearly ready to take the place of the stone altar which, as we have already stated, has been removed, and communion rails are prepared. The church will be re-opened in a few Sundays for divine service.

At Cambridge, that venerable structure Jesus College Chapel is now in course of being rescued from the melancholy state in which it has been left for many years. From a legacy, benefaction, and other sources, the master and fellows are enabled, and have determined to spend about 1,000*l.* on its restoration; the works were commenced in the Easter vacation, and are to be continued in the long vacation: the ceilings are to be removed and the arcades set free, and the whole to be brought more nearly to its ancient character. At a meeting, held recently, of the Ripon Diocesan Church Building Society, the following grants were made in aid of the erection of new churches, viz.: 400*l.* to Middleton, in the parish of Rothwell, to contain 502 sittings, estimated cost 2,200*l.*; 300*l.* to St. Mary's, Sowerby, in the parish of Halifax, having accommodation for 404 adults and 150 scholars, estimated cost 1,635*l.*; 500*l.* to St. Andrew's, Wakefield, having accommodation for 700 persons, estimated cost 2,200*l.*

The works on the Blackburn and Preston Railway are proceeding rapidly. Upwards of 100,000 cubic yards of earth have been removed, and in several places active preparations are being made for laying down portions of the permanent way. The piers of the viaduct over the river Darwen, at Houghton, which have formed one of the most difficult portions of the undertaking, are now up to the level of the water, and several of the bridges on the Houghton contract are commenced. The works at the Blackburn end, which have only lately been commenced, are now urged forward with increased energy.

At Scarborough, the improvements at the opening of St. Nicholas's-street are rapidly progressing. The excavations for the foundations of the new houses are completed, and not many weeks will elapse before the new frontage is reared, and the row of commodious shops prepared for the coming season. The Lords of the Admiralty have appointed James Walker, Esq., C.E., and Captain Vidal, R.N., to inquire into the plans of the South Wales Railway Bridge over the Severn, at the Huck Crib, the proposed cut or canal from that spot to Framilode, and the other works connected therewith, with the view of ascertaining the probable effects of the same upon the navigation of the river. It is expected, that during the summer, the Grand Junction Railway Company will build more cottages at their "new town" of Crewe, the number of cottages at present being inadequate for their numerous workpeople. Every house is now occupied, and several of them by more than one family. The *Chester Courier* in mentioning the fact appends the following remark:—"Among the many speculations of the day, it is a matter of surprise to us that no company has yet been formed to build towns contiguous to the principal stations. No doubt, if building societies were organised for this purpose, a good per centage would be obtained for money." The Earl of Derby has contracted for the erection of a stupendous conservatory and aviary of a great height, and mostly glass on all sides, in Lancashire. At a meeting of the Huntingdon Commissioners of Pavement, on Wednesday week, the subject was renewed of introducing a new system of road making lately adopted at Burton-upon-Trent, and found to answer there exceedingly well. It consists of an under stratum of angular broken stones, then a layer of smaller stones and gravel, and the upper coat of gravel mixed with gaster, the whole being about six inches in depth. It resists the wet, is perfectly free from dust, and unattended by any of the inconveniences of the woad-pavement; whilst the cost would be less than the present system of using cobbles. After much discussion, it was resolved to try the experiment on about 150 yards in the High-street, and should it be

* See p. 211 ante.

† See page 208, ante.